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*President:* Mr. Han Seung-soo ..... (Republic of Korea)

*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

**Agenda item 166** (*continued*)

**Measures to eliminate international terrorism**

**Report of the Secretary-General** (A/56/160 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

**Mr. Rosenthal** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Next Friday, Ambassador Edmundo Orellana Mercado of Honduras, in his capacity as President Pro Tempore of the Central American Integration System, will be making a statement on behalf of member countries. Guatemala totally associates itself with the statement that Ambassador Orellana will be making. Moreover, we would like to make a few specific points from the standpoint of our own country.

I hail from a country that, in a certain way, is a microcosm of the world. Within it, individual income levels that compare with those of the richer countries coexist with incomes that put us among the poorest; islands of modernity dot a sea of backwardness; methods of production and organization befitting the twenty-first century operate in parallel, and sometimes in an interconnected fashion, with others that have hardly evolved in the last four centuries. One finds, likewise, a modern culture that coexists with cultures that date back centuries. The tensions that derive from these and other antipodal relationships marking Guatemalan society have, in the past, given rise to manifestations of violence, intolerance and also terrorism. We have thus come to realize, as a general premise and through our own experience, that no social claim, however legitimate it may appear to its adherents, justifies taking the lives of innocent civilians through acts whose only logic is to sow terror, disquiet and destruction.

We have also learned that, first of all, representative democracy is the friendliest framework for the expression, discussion and eventual resolution of grievances. Secondly, economic and social development is the most appropriate method for responding to many of the grievances that have accumulated over time. And, thirdly, multiculturalism is not only compatible with social cohesion, but the latter is actually promoted by cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity.

It follows from all that we have been through at the national level that both the Government and civil society of my country reject, categorically and vigorously, all forms of terrorism. We fully realize that terrorism flouts the universally accepted values recognized on the international level, including the right to life, the right to live free from fear and the right to freedom of movement. In addition, terrorism, in any of its forms, is apt to give rise, in international relations, to a gamut of negative effects ranging from frictions between States to the breach of international peace.

Terrorism clashes, moreover, with values that are the mainstays of our national legislation, as well as of the undertakings laid down in the Peace Agreements

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concluded in 1996, including representative democracy, the right to development, tolerance and full observance of human rights. In our case, the identity and the rights of indigenous peoples hold particular significance.

Our horror and repudiation of the tragic events of 11 September have been expressed in various forums and in different ways. These include our expressions of solidarity and sympathy with the Government and people of the United States, our firm support for resolution 56/1 of this General Assembly, as well as for the two resolutions adopted on 21 September within the Organization of American States (OAS), and the declaration of the Presidents of Central America and a representative of Belize of 19 September entitled "Central America United against Terrorism". I will not dwell on that aspect on this occasion. Rather, I wish to summarize our policy on how to deal with the situation in the future, based on the following six points.

The first is our absolute and unequivocal rejection of the use of indiscriminate violence against innocent persons, regardless of who promotes it, for the purpose of intimidating, threatening, blackmailing or provoking terror, as well as our unreserved identification with the declarations annexed to resolutions 49/60 and 51/210.

The second is our conviction that the fight against terrorism is and must be a means of realizing and ensuring the values enshrined in the United Nations Charter of promoting tolerance, peaceful coexistence among different cultures, religions, races and nations and the celebration of the richness inherent in human diversity. Thus the fight against terrorism should never be a means of encouraging actions against particular races, religions, cultures, beliefs or creeds. This conviction is particularly meaningful in this United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations.

Thirdly, combating terrorism without quarter also involves fighting crime, drug-trafficking and money-laundering, given the actual or potential links between these scourges, which are becoming increasingly international in nature.

The fourth point is our conviction that the fight against terrorism requires action at the level of each of our countries, complemented by actions within the multilateral framework, in which both regional and international organizations have a fundamental role to play.

Fifthly, along those lines, we believe it is necessary to apply with greater rigour and effectiveness the large body of international legal norms, embodied in conventions, protocols and declarations already adopted within the United Nations system during the last 30 years, aimed at collectively fighting terrorism. For our part, the events of 11 September have introduced a renewed sense of the urgent need for our participation in all the existing global counter-terrorism treaties, including the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

Sixthly, since that body of norms, complemented by the measures taken at the level of each country as well as regionally, was insufficient to prevent the events we witnessed on 11 September, we favour the adoption, within the framework of the United Nations, of a comprehensive convention against terrorism and a convention against acts of nuclear terrorism. We concur likewise with the view expressed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan that the United Nations is the natural forum for tackling this common scourge, as well as the most appropriate body for dealing with it, as the Security Council demonstrated last Friday.

Finally, events as horrendous and tragic as those that will always be associated with 11 September should undoubtedly bring some alteration of our organization of work to give terrorism the attention it deserves. We should not, however, falter in dealing with other priority items and objectives contained in the Millennium Declaration. After all, part of the fight against terrorism consists in creating throughout the world conditions that eliminate the breeding ground for extremist causes. Thus international peace and security, the defence of the environment, the observance of human rights and especially development should all form part of our priority agenda.

**Mr. Al-Ashtal** (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): It gives me pleasure to extend to you, Mr. President, our congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly. I am confident that you will conduct the work of this fifty-sixth session successfully, given your well-known ability, expertise and rich political experience.

On 11 September the world was shocked, watching on television screens the horrible terrorist explosions in the cities of New York and Washington

and in Pennsylvania that killed thousands of innocent United States citizens and a large number of citizens from other countries, including Yemeni citizens. On this painful and sad occasion we fully condemn these barbaric terrorist acts against the United States, and extend our heartfelt condolences and deep sympathy to the American people in general and to the families and relatives of the victims in particular.

The Republic of Yemen, which has long suffered from terrorist acts, the most recent being the attack against the United States destroyer *Cole* in the Gulf of Aden, condemns unreservedly all terrorist attacks and reaffirms the need to combat these acts at all national and international levels.

We also call for the implementation of the provisions of international law and relevant resolutions on the prohibition of the commission of terrorist attacks, their financing, incitement, condoning and protection or provision of asylum to the perpetrators. In this regard, Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), which we strongly welcome, was unanimously adopted on Friday in response to the urgent need to drain all terrorist financing sources. The resolution also reaffirmed the need for information exchange between States, with a view to combating terrorist acts at an earlier stage. It is clear that the importance of this resolution lies not only in the fact that it was adopted by the Security Council but also in that it was an action-oriented and mandatory resolution adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter. The Security Council has decided to establish a Security Council Committee, composed of all its members, to monitor the implementation of the resolution and call on appropriate expertise. It also called on all States to provide the Committee with information on the steps taken in implementing the resolution, including the issuance of laws and rules and the establishment of national measures in accordance with the Security Council resolution.

Although the resolution is a new step in the fight against terrorism, it contains a loophole that will undoubtedly affect the possibility of its implementation, particularly since it requires a positive response and cooperation on the part of all States. The resolution is not based on an agreed definition of terrorism or terrorist acts. Therefore, the Committee established by the Council to monitor the implementation of the resolution will bear the great responsibility of defining the terrorists targeted by the resolution. The Committee will gain the full cooperation of States in implementing Council resolutions insofar as it takes into account other United Nations resolutions, particularly General Assembly resolutions.

Terrorism is a global phenomenon that does not recognize national, religious or geographical boundaries. It is synonymous with extremism and blind intolerance. It is therefore a mistake to direct an accusation of terrorism against any nation, people or religion. We therefore denounce retaliatory acts against Arabs and Muslims anywhere. At the same time, we note with satisfaction the positions of some high officials in the United States and Europe who have also denounced retaliatory acts against Arabs and Muslims in their countries.

Terrorism is a crime that cannot be justified or left unpunished. In view of the increasing importance of combating terrorism at the international level, the General Assembly has included an item on measures to eliminate terrorism in its agenda since the twenty-seventh session in 1972. The Republic of Yemen, guided by the tolerant teachings of Islam and a commitment to the Charter, human rights conventions and conventions against terrorism, does its utmost to combat this very serious phenomenon in society. We have therefore taken all possible legislative and administrative measures. Furthermore, we denounce and condemn criminal terrorist acts anywhere in the world and express our readiness to cooperate regionally and internationally in all efforts to combat that scourge.

The Republic of Yemen is party to most international conventions against terrorism. In 2001, certain laws were enacted in Yemen with regard to conventions against terrorism; they are: law No. 9 (2000) with regard to the approval of accession of Yemen to the Protocol on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports serving International Civil Aviation, supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation signed in Montreal in 1971; law No. 10 (2000) with regard to approving the accession of the Republic of Yemen to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation signed in Rome in 1988; law No. 12 (2000) on the accession of the Republic of Yemen to the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf, which was also signed in Rome.

On the whole, the Republic of Yemen has signed 10 conventions against terrorism. Aside from the provisions of Islamic shariah, which combats terrorist activities, our national legislation, especially criminal law, has included very firm laws and strict punishment against terrorist acts. We have also enacted a law against the crimes of kidnapping and highway robbery in 1998, and imposed the most severe of penalties against the perpetrators of such crimes. Our legislative bodies have been implementing all this legislation and have imposed severe sentences against perpetrators of terrorist acts, which has amounted to execution in certain cases.

We call for combating terrorism, including State terrorism, which is practised by Israel against the Palestinians. The terrorism, systematic killing, violence and sieges witnessed and suffered by the Palestinians, the elderly, women and children at the hands of the Israeli army and heavily armed settlers should also be denounced and condemned. We call upon the international community and the United Nations to provide the appropriate protection for the Palestinian people.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that the draft comprehensive convention against international terrorism comes at the right time, and can be developed to represent another instrument that would close all the loopholes in the partial conventions against terrorism. We hope to start the third millennium leaving behind violence, war, destruction and fear, and looking forward to a world of peace, security, justice, equality and prosperity for all peoples, where human rights are embodied in their noblest meaning.

**Mr. Sun** (Republic of Korea): The Republic of Korea strongly condemns the abominable crime committed against innocent civilians on September 11. Such terrorist acts constitute barbaric assaults on human decency and democracy. As they also run counter to the purposes and principles of the Charter and international law in general, the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of such heinous acts should be brought to justice.

The Government of the Republic of Korea has maintained its unflagging position against international terrorism. We reaffirm our unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, for whatever purpose and by whomever it is perpetrated. The Republic of Korea is determined to take part in collective actions, as well as take individual steps deemed necessary, to deter future acts of international terrorism, with a view to enhancing long-term international peace and security.

In that regard, the Republic of Korea welcomes the adoption of resolution 56/1 and Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001), of 12 September, and 1373 (2001), of 28 September 2001.

The attacks have made it evident that no country and no place is free from the scourge of terrorism. Terrorism has become increasingly destructive in its magnitude and unimaginable in its forms and manifestations. As confirmed in the Council's resolution, terrorism has become one of the principal threats to international peace and security. In the light of these circumstances, it is imperative that the international community move forward to vigorously deal with these new challenges and to ensure that terrorists do not achieve their odious goals. Particularly pressing is the need to strengthen joint international efforts to prevent terrorist attacks using commercial airlines and other means.

This tragedy has presented us with the solemn task of tackling terrorism issues at the United Nations. The General Assembly, where international opinion on this matter is converging, is an important forum for pursuing a cooperative international effort to prevent and suppress the terrorist threat. The international community is watching us, anticipating with great hope a concerted effort against terrorism. It is incumbent upon us to live up to that hope.

As the Secretary-General pointed out, the most crucial thing as we face this tremendous challenge is to maintain unity among ourselves. We should stand together and demonstrate our unswerving resolve to those who have committed acts of terrorism.

In that regard, I call upon all Member States to work together to ensure the early adoption of the comprehensive convention and the full implementation of all relevant conventions. My delegation also wishes to see the divergence of views on the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism resolved as swiftly as possible.

It is equally important for Member States to take the necessary steps to translate international agreements into specific domestic laws and regulations in order to strengthen overall preparedness against

terrorism and to take the necessary actions thereon. In particular, it is urgent that all Member States take effective measures to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorists and terrorist organizations.

My delegation also supports regional cooperation for the prevention of terrorism, as a complement to the United Nations efforts to suppress terrorism and raise public awareness of the terrorist threat. The synergy created through the pursuit of both regional and international strategies will be instrumental in the formation of a successful collective effort to suppress international terrorism.

The Republic of Korea, currently a party to 7 of the 12 international instruments for the suppression of international terrorism, will accelerate its domestic procedure for the early ratification of, or accession to, the remaining 5 agreements, including the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Furthermore, in order to enhance the effectiveness of its domestic mechanism for combating terrorism, the Republic of Korea will enact an anti-terrorism law at the earliest possible date.

In the meantime, my Government will implement Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001), and is more than willing to take part in the collective undertakings of the international community.

**Mr. Erwa** (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I have the great pleasure of extending my sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to preside over the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. We are confident that, with your well-known statesmanship and abilities, you will successfully conduct the work of this session. I must also extend my thanks and appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Harri Holkeri, who has just concluded a term of office replete with accomplishments.

Our deliberations this year on measures to eliminate international terrorism have taken on particular importance, as we have experienced a humanitarian tragedy resulting from the criminal terrorist act that took place on 11 September. In addition to horrifying other American cities, that event horrified the people of New York city, the host of our international Organization, and claimed the lives of thousands of innocent people. My delegation wishes to stress its total condemnation of that heinous act. We extend our deepest sympathy and most sincere condolences to the American delegation. We ask that it convey those condolences to the bereaved families of the victims and to the families of the firemen, policemen and medical staff who gave their lives in the line of duty.

Sudan's condemnation and renunciation of acts of terrorism targeting innocent civilians is not born of the moment; rather, it is a reflection of a genuine spirit stemming from our cultural heritage and values. Our position is grounded in good will and is an extension of the ceaseless effort in which we have been engaged for years to underscore Sudan's commitment to combating terrorism. In this regard, Sudan has actively cooperated with the Security Council. It has also signed and acceded to every international convention on terrorism — all international conventions to eliminate international terrorism. Sudan is therefore among the countries at the very forefront of that effort. Sudan has also renewed its commitment to the elimination of international terrorism by participating in bilateral cooperative programmes with its immediate neighbours and with other States, including the United States of America.

Sudan wishes to express its support for the statement to be made subsequently on behalf of the Arab Group on measures to eliminate international terrorism. The Sudan also reaffirms its commitment to the established principles of the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement in this sphere. The Sudan also stresses the importance of respect for the inalienable right of all peoples under foreign occupation to self-determination and independence. In that connection, we warn that Israeli exploitation of the current situation in order to escalate oppression of the Palestinian people would be a grave matter.

My delegation is convinced that terrorism is a criminal scourge that must not be linked with any culture, race or religion. Terrorism is terrorism. What took place on 11 September was an act of terrorism that had nothing whatever to do with Islam.

My delegation is most grateful for the wise statements and assurances offered by President Bush, by other members of the United States Administration and by European leaders affirming that the war against terrorism does not mean a war against Islam. We stress the importance of bolstering coexistence among religions and cultures.

The Sudan is matching its words with deeds. We proclaim to all that our territory will never be a haven for terrorists or terrorist groups, and we express our commitment to constructive cooperation in any international effort to eradicate terrorism. The Sudan renews its determination to implement the relevant provisions of international law and United Nations resolutions on the suppression of acts of terrorism and of funding, instigating and condoning them and protecting their perpetrators. It welcomes Security Council resolution 1373 (2001).

Sudan, itself a victim of terrorism by outlaw groups, takes this opportunity to call on all States Members of the United Nations to respond positively to General Assembly resolution 56/1, and to commit themselves without reservation to its letter and spirit with a view to combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

In conclusion, we pray that peace may hold sway throughout the world, that justice, equity and right may reign, and that bitterness may be eradicated. We pray that all people may coexist, irrespective of race, colour or religion, in a world that we wish to be stable, secure, united and peace-loving.

**Mr. Cowen** (Ireland): There are moments in history so defining and so etched in the memory of all who witness them that they become landmarks in time, defining events that change history and lead to new impulses of resolve and determination. On 11 September, such a moment occurred as the forces of international terrorism struck the people of the United States with a viciousness and evil of purpose that caused revulsion and horror around the world.

Those acts of barbarous terrorism and the determined international response which must necessarily follow do not, as some have suggested, represent a conflict between civilizations, or a religious war. International terrorism strikes at the universal values, including that of religious tolerance, on which the United Nations is founded. Our collective response to these outrages must uphold those values and put in stark relief the differences which divide those who uphold the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and those, hiding in our midst, who would seek to subvert those same principles.

International terrorism must be denied the means and the opportunity to launch attacks in pursuit of any cause or perceived grievance. There can be no exceptions. This calls for firm resolve. The defeat of terrorism will take time, and it cannot be achieved in the absence of a total commitment by Governments to the task and without the widest possible cooperation among them.

The General Assembly has done excellent work over the years in addressing various aspects of terrorism and in establishing the measures that Member States need to take. That work must now be carried on with a greater sense of urgency to achieve the full complement of international instruments that is required. Of course, reaching agreement on conventions in this Assembly is clearly not enough, and neither is their signature. The record of signature, ratification and implementation has been disappointing, and this work must now move right to the top of our agenda. It is by our actions alone that we can demonstrate our determination to succeed.

Action has already been forthcoming in the Security Council and in the General Assembly. The message is going out. We, the peoples of the United Nations, are saying to the terrorists: you do not act for us; we reject your campaign of death and murder; your path is the path to the destruction of everything we cherish and all that the United Nations embodies and reflects; we will act together to ensure that you do not prevail.

We must meet the threat of international terrorism on three levels. First, we must, as States Members of the United Nations, do all we can in accordance with Security Council resolution 1368 (2001), to bring to justice the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of the attacks of 11 September and to prevent further such atrocities. Secondly, we must combine in a longer-term initiative to defeat the monster of international terrorism by choking off its funds, by cutting its supply of munitions and technical support and by denying it the bases from which it plans and prepares its actions. Thirdly, we must redouble our efforts to put an end to the many conflicts and injustices which, while they can never, ever justify the horrors of 11 September, are exploited by the terrorists to garner support for their warped philosophies.

At the first level, dealing with the immediate security threat, the Security Council has acknowledged, in its resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001), the inherent right of individual and collective self-defence, as recognized under Article 51 of the Charter. The

United States has suffered a most grievous assault, one of a long series of terrorist attacks against United States targets. Who can reasonably argue that the United States does not have the right to defend itself, in a targeted and proportionate manner, by bringing to justice those who planned, perpetrated and assisted in these outrages and who continue to threaten international peace and security?

Ireland is seeking to play its part in efforts to respond to the immediate terrorist threat by cooperating in police investigations and by opening our airspace and airports to aircraft operating in pursuit of Security Council resolution 1368 (2001). Ireland is not a member of a military alliance, but Ireland is not neutral in the struggle against international terrorism.

How, I ask, can any Member of the United Nations abstain from joining a collective effort to confront what is a global threat to international peace and security?

The fact that the Taliban regime in Afghanistan has, for the past two years, defied the demands of the Security Council to hand over Osama bin Laden, a main suspect in the terrorist campaign against the United States, surely justifies the refusal by virtually the entire international community to grant it diplomatic recognition.

But let me be clear. The Afghan people, who are already suffering terribly from the effects of drought, civil war and political instability, are not to blame for the actions of the Taliban and must not suffer the consequences of the Taliban's defiance. The international community is rightly mobilizing to deal with the worsening humanitarian situation facing the people of Afghanistan. For Ireland's part, my Government yesterday announced that we will allocate a further sum of over $3 million in response to the United Nations donor alert.

At the second level — the need for legal action — we must act in concert to deny international terrorism the means and capacity to launch attacks on both people and property. This can be achieved only through a strong commitment by all our Governments to the task, and with the widest possible cooperation between us.

The General Assembly has done excellent work over the years in addressing various aspects of terrorism. We already have 12 different international conventions that bear in some way or another on terrorism, including a most important one, the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted in 1999. We must — my own Government included — move quickly to ensure the ratification and implementation of those conventions.

We need to go further, for instance, by speeding up work on the draft comprehensive convention on terrorism that was initiated by India, and the convention on nuclear terrorism that has been proposed by the Russian Federation.

The Security Council has also been active. Ireland, as current President of the Security Council, strongly welcomes the adoption last Friday of resolution 1373 (2001). We will do all in our power to ensure that the committee to be established to monitor the implementation of the resolution by all Member States is operational as soon as possible. In this regard, I am hopeful that it will be possible to reach an early agreement on the structure and chairmanship of that committee.

At the third level, we must seek to eliminate the conflict, alienation and deprivation which is used by the godfathers of international terrorism to justify their actions. We must demonstrate that we can deal with these problems, either directly or indirectly, and resolve them through peaceful dialogue and cooperation.

Negotiation, conducted on a basis of mutual respect, leading to a just and peaceful settlement that embodies the legitimate rights of the parties, is the only effective means of conflict resolution. Our own experience in Ireland in this regard bears this out. The task which we face in Ireland is to move the political process forward at the earliest moment. It is imperative that all those with responsibilities live up to their obligations.

Successful negotiation involves compromise, which all too often is misrepresented as appeasement or surrender. We need to rehabilitate the concept of compromise and face down the forces of extremism. We have seen in many instances around the world how extremists, fearing compromise, will commit terrorist outrages precisely with the aim of blocking moves towards negotiations. We must not allow them to succeed in their aim.

The city of New York has hosted the Headquarters of the United Nations for over half a century. During that time, the city's services — its police department and its fire department — have ensured the physical safety of this Organization and of its Member States' delegations. We owe this city and its services a special debt of thanks. We know that the police and fire-fighters who went up the stairs of the World Trade Center to save others and thereby lost their own lives would have done the same had it been the United Nations building that was under attack, or any of the buildings that house our missions or our mission staff.

The police and fire-fighters of New York City made that sacrifice. They chose to put their lives on the line in rejecting the campaign of murder and destruction waged by the dark, secretive and cowardly men of terror. The families have sacrificed their loved ones in the most noble show of determination that the terrorists, whoever they are and wherever they hide, do not act for us, the people of the free world.

Let those images and those stories of bravery and heroism in the face of the most awful terror stand as a constant reminder that we, the members of this Assembly, have our own duty to perform to ensure that terrorists will find no welcome in any part of the globe. That duty is about action, and not words.

We heard Mayor Giuliani yesterday morning speak words of wisdom and leadership from this rostrum. On behalf of the Irish people, I can only say today that New York City has honoured us over the past weeks by its courage and nobility of action.

I saw with my own eyes the wreckage of the World Trade Center, in which are entombed the remains of more than 5,000 people. Out of this wreckage and this appalling destruction of human life, we the peoples of the United Nations must seek to rebuild the moral authority of our Organization. We must begin by leading the fight against international terrorism. The Irish Government and our delegation in New York stand ready to work throughout our presidency of the Security Council and beyond to meet this challenge. This will not be a short or an easy struggle, but for our sake and the sake of succeeding generations, it is one in which we simply must prevail.

**Mrs. Ratsifandrihamanana** (Madagascar) (*spoke in French*): From this rostrum, Madagascar, through me, associates itself with the greetings and tribute expressed to you, Sir, on the occasion of your assumption of the presidency of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, as well as with those extended to your predecessor, Mr. Harri Holkeri. We reiterate our congratulations to Secretary-General Kofi Annan on his re-election, which attests to the trust and gratitude we feel for him.

Today, not long after the unprecedented tragedy that took place in this very city, at the heart of the most powerful state in America, tears are far from dry, wounds are far from healed, and anger is far from cooled. Humanity as a whole has been shaken.

Yesterday we listened attentively to the statement made by Mr. Rudolph Giuliani, Mayor of the city of New York. We share his sorrow and that of the people and the Government of the United States following the sudden death of thousands of innocent people, the massacre of our brothers and sisters, the suffering of thousands of orphaned children and the agony of bereaved fathers and mothers. We share in the resolve of the people and the Government of the United States to rebuild this legendary city and to restore a unique historical monument — the symbol of prosperity and freedom and the reflection of strength in unity. It goes without saying that all countries, without exception, must resolutely align themselves with a global coalition against the universal scourge that is terrorism.

On behalf of the people and Government of Madagascar, I wish to reiterate our profound sympathy and heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims of these barbaric acts. Allow me to quote from the message addressed to President George Bush by the President of the Republic of Madagascar, Didier Ratsiraka, shortly after the disaster:

> "I have learned with horror of the deadly attacks that have sent the entire American nation into mourning today. I wish to express my indignation and strong condemnation of these acts."

Echoing that message, from this rostrum I wish to express our unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms, in all its natures, wherever it is perpetrated and by whomever it is carried out.

We welcome the initiative to hold this meeting, which we consider to be extremely important. Madagascar is firmly convinced that our Organization has a pre-eminent role to play in the fight against

international terrorism. As a guarantor of world security and as the supreme decision-making entity, the United Nations must fully and speedily involve itself in implementing sanctions against the perpetrators of terrorism.

At the Millennium Summit, we pledged to combat crime and terrorism, to abide by the relevant international conventions and to implement them forthwith. Madagascar fully associates itself with the resolution adopted on 12 September 2001, condemning the terrorist attacks on the United States of America, as well as Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), adopted on 28 September.

Pursuant to its principles, Madagascar has acceded, inter alia, to the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism of the Organization of African Unity. Moreover, Madagascar has signed the Convention on Transnational Crime and its two Protocols.

At the regional level, Madagascar has always advocated that the Indian Ocean be established as a zone of peace by pursuing ongoing cooperation with our sister islands within the Indian Ocean Commission. A strategy has been identified that includes information exchange on major trafficking activities, plans to harmonize legislation and the conclusion of a protocol for an agreement establishing multilateral operational structures to prevent and punish transnational crime.

At the national level, security arrangements were strengthened immediately following the attacks of 11 September. These steps involve administrative buildings, diplomatic missions, port and airport infrastructures and coastal borders. Measures were taken to tighten control and monitoring of traffic throughout our national territory. The granting of entry visas and temporary residence visas is now the subject of heightened security. In order to guarantee the safety of air transport, we have extended insurance coverage for national airlines.

The upsurge in terrorist acts, the diverse methods used and the spread of the terrorist network require us to rethink our strategy in the common struggle. In this context, my delegation hopes to see the adoption, as soon as possible, of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. This comprehensive convention will be based on the 12 existing multilateral conventions on the prevention and suppression of terrorism and will emphasize specific measures to be undertaken by member countries. International cooperation in police and judicial investigations must be strengthened. In this respect, the developing countries require sustained assistance and material aid.

As past experience has shown, the ability to undertake new operations depends on the availability of support funds. There is thus a need to establish a world fund to combat terrorism, which should be institutionalized and aligned like other United Nations funds. In this regard, we suggest that this matter be placed on the agenda of the next special session.

Recent studies have highlighted the close correlation between the spread of terrorism and drug trafficking. The laundering of profits from the drug trade is a principal source of financing for terrorism. That is why we must strengthen regulations in force in our respective countries and redouble our efforts to dismantle the networks to produce and distribute drugs.

Unfortunately, globalization has increased the development gap between South and North. This has certainly led to political, ideological, identity, cultural and economic frustrations, which are the probable sources of violence and mindless acts. Overhauling international policy on official development assistance to provide better assistance to poor countries has become more urgent than ever before.

The top priority remains the eradication of hotbeds of tension and conflict. We welcome the recent meeting between the President of the Palestinian Authority, Yasser Arafat, and Israeli Minister Shimon Peres. We hope to see a rapid and positive development of the situation in the Middle East.

In this United Nations Year of Dialogue Among Civilizations, learning tolerance is a sacred duty. The President of the Republic of Madagascar has proposed the establishment at the national level of a non-aggression pact among recognized religious institutions. This initiative could be significantly expanded in order to ensure a climate of trust and calm. No religion should ever be used to justify criminal acts, suicide or massacres of any kind. We must have the courage to denounce the proliferation of extremist and sectarian religious groups.

In conclusion, together we must cultivate intercultural dialogue; together we need to relearn how to listen to one another; together we must promote mutual understanding so that, together, we can better fight terrorism.

**Mr. Hasmy** (Malaysia): The issue before us has become even more pertinent and urgent following the recent terrorist attacks against the United States that resulted in enormous loss of life and property. Malaysia strongly condemns the heinous acts of 11 September and fervently hopes that those responsible will finally be brought to justice. We share the grief of the people of the United States and other nations who have also lost their citizens. We, too, have lost a number of our own in the tragedy. The attacks were a shocking and cruel wake-up call for all of us to the danger of international terrorism, to which all countries are vulnerable, and which represents a most complex security challenge facing our global society today.

*Mr. Shobokshi (Saudi Arabia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

Malaysia condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We regard all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal acts that cannot be justified, regardless of the motivation of their perpetrators — inasmuch as innocent, defenceless civilians become their victims. Terrorism is the violent manifestation of hate and intolerance. It threatens the right to life, liberty and security. It engenders chaos, fear and insecurity, as well as instability and uncertainty on all fronts.

In the wake of the horrific attacks on the United States, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, called for the convening of a world conference of leaders to discuss the issue of international terrorism because of the serious nature of this crime, which can affect all countries. While he understood the reasons for the ongoing planning to hunt down terrorist groups and stop terrorism, he was against the use of force that resulted in the victimization of innocent civilians. He felt that retaliatory actions through the use of force would not solve the problem, as they might only provoke counter-retaliation and were therefore fraught with risks to international peace and security.

In my Prime Minister's view, in order for global efforts to be effective in curbing terrorism, it is important for the international community to deal with the phenomenon objectively and impartially. The international conference, which should be organized by the United Nations, must examine the issue of terrorism comprehensively, including its definition, root causes and appropriate measures to deal with it. The measures that are now being contemplated outside the United Nations, including the use of armed force, will not solve the problem as long as issues related to the oppression of peoples in several parts of the world, particularly in Palestine, remain unresolved.

While Malaysia strongly supports efforts to curb terrorism, it is time for the world community to give serious attention to solving the problems which drive people to resort to terrorism. This is not to excuse, or mitigate the blame, for the use of terror — there can be no excuse for or mitigating the gravity of such acts — but to appreciate the complexity of the problem of international terrorism so that we are better able to combat it as effectively as possible and with all the means at our disposal.

Both the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement had called for the convening of an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations for the purpose of formulating a joint organized response to international terrorism. Regrettably, although this proposal was included in the agenda of the Ad Hoc Committee established by the General Assembly in resolution 51/210, no progress has been made so far in realizing it.

Given the enormity of the challenge confronting the international community, the convening of a United Nations conference on terrorism would serve the purpose of galvanizing a collective international effort based on a broad consensus at the highest possible level. It would provide the necessary political impetus for completing ongoing efforts at the United Nations to address the problem, in particular the elaboration of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism and a convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. As we are all agreed that the recent terrorist attacks were directed against not only the United States but all States Members of this Organization, it is important that this all-out war against this menace to civilized life be waged here in the United Nations and involve all Member States, with each of us playing our full and appropriate role. We hope that this overwhelming expression of international solidarity and support for the anti-terrorist campaign will not be a

mere flash in the pan, but the beginning of a serious, ongoing effort here at the United Nations.

The need for objectivity and impartiality is essential if terrorism is to be suppressed through the collaborative efforts of the international community, without any equivocation. This is particularly the case given the tendency in some quarters to associate terrorism with a particular group or community of people. The stereotyping of terrorism is not a constructive approach in dealing with the problem; it would do a great disservice to the cause that has united us in the wake of the recent tragic events. It would create mistrust among nations, when what is urgently required is the building of confidence among them, which is essential in the global effort to combat this menace. Terrorism is the common foe of the global community; it should not be coloured with ethnicity or any form of religious affinity.

As has already been said by previous speakers, terrorism has no religion or nationality. Terrorism serves only the selfish personal or group interests of the perpetrators and their sponsors. Herein lies the importance of the need to enhance greater understanding among the peoples of the world through a dialogue among civilizations, which, we sincerely hope, will be given higher priority in the agenda of the United Nations, particularly in the context of the current situation.

In addressing the problem of terrorism, there is a need for States to reflect on their own practices in dealing with internal security situations. Actions carried out by the security apparatus of a State in the name of security, but which create widespread fear and apprehension among the civilian population, are as inhumane and as devastating as any other form of terrorism. In taking security measures, States must be guided by the principle of proportionate response. This is especially relevant in the context of the current situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, where excessive force has been used to intimidate people fighting for their rights. Such use of force by States, resulting in massive loss of life, injury and extreme hardship for the civilian population, must be viewed with the same contempt reserved for acts of violence carried out by terrorist groups.

In confronting the challenge before us, my delegation strongly supports the ongoing efforts in the Sixth Committee and the General Assembly to elaborate a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. However, in crafting such a convention, it is important to arrive at a clear and universally agreed definition of terrorism. Without an agreed definition, it would be difficult to formulate or enforce international agreements to combat this scourge. Acts of pure terrorism, involving attacks against innocent civilian populations — which cannot be justified under any circumstances — should be differentiated from the legitimate struggles of peoples under colonial or alien domination or foreign occupation for self-determination and national liberation, as recognized by the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and international declarations. All States Members of this Organization that gained their freedom through a liberation struggle or war of independence would fully appreciate and support that inherent, inalienable and legitimate right. We earnestly hope that the urgency of the current international efforts to combat terrorism will spur on negotiations on the draft convention during this session of the General Assembly.

No discussion of international terrorism would be complete without a discussion of the threat posed by nuclear terrorism. The recent daring terrorist attacks against the United States, using sophisticated methods, have considerably heightened this concern and demand a serious response on our part to the inherent risks of nuclear terrorism. While, ultimately, the most effective way of preventing acts of nuclear terrorism lies in the total elimination of nuclear weapons — which should remain our long-term objective — the early adoption of an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism would be an important first step towards eliminating that threat. Equally important would be the strengthening of all existing treaties, agreements and norms aimed at reducing and ultimately eliminating nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

The strengthening of international cooperation is essential if we are to succeed in our common but difficult quest. The tasks ahead of us are enormously challenging, requiring of all of us national, regional and international efforts and cooperation aimed at, among other things, apprehending and bringing to justice the perpetrators; concluding agreements and other cooperative arrangements towards that end; implementing the relevant international legal instruments which we are parties to; and denying asylum to terrorists and freezing their assets. Malaysia

will do its part. We will support all efforts aimed at promoting international cooperation in combating terrorism in accordance with the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter. Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), adopted last Friday, provides an important framework for this cooperation.

**Mr. Ingólfsson** (Iceland): Taking the floor for the first time during the fifty-sixth session, let me extend to the President my sincere congratulations on his election. In these trying times, he will be playing an important role, and I assure him of the willingness of the Icelandic delegation to support his efforts.

As this is also the first time Iceland has taken the floor after the horrific terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September, I would like to express the heartfelt sympathy of the Government and people of Iceland to the Government and people of the United States. Our nation feels for the families and friends of the victims. We strongly condemn the forces behind these incomprehensibly brutal and cowardly acts against innocent people.

I welcome this opportunity to reiterate Iceland's full support for the way in which the United States is conducting its response to the threat of international terrorism. To deal with that threat effectively requires a comprehensive, long-term approach beyond military reprisals, however necessary the use of force may be. As a global problem, terrorism, including its networks and resources, will also require the undivided attention of the international community as a whole.

We are seeing the emergence of an international coalition which stands ready in the short term to bring those responsible to justice, and in the long term to cooperate closely in uprooting terrorist organizations in the world, relieving the future of this evil. This is indeed a positive development.

In this context, allow me also to underline the important and historic decision of the North Atlantic Alliance to invoke article 5 of the Washington Treaty. An attack on the United States thus became an attack on each and every member of an alliance committed to collective defence. The right of individual or collective defence is firmly anchored in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. The North Atlantic Alliance is prepared for a long campaign against international terrorism in cooperation with its partners. In this context, I would particularly like to note the important role of the Russian Federation.

Consolidation of efforts is needed. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has called on all 55 participating States to work together to develop an OSCE-wide plan of action for the fight against terrorism. The same is true of the Council of Europe and the European Union, which have reacted with the same swift determination to find ways to fight international terrorism.

At the national level, Iceland has taken the necessary steps to become a party to and ratify the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism — which we signed yesterday — and to speedily ratify the already signed International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings. Furthermore, we are also considering other United Nations conventions against terrorism that Iceland is not yet a party to, with a view to ratifying them as soon as possible. Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999), 1269 (1999) and 1333 (2000) are also being implemented.

In this regard, we welcome the swift and unanimous action by the Security Council in adopting resolution 1373 (2001), inter alia to block all possible means of terrorist financing. Iceland is also closely cooperating with the European Union in adopting and revising its legislation in order to facilitate the suppression of international terrorism.

All this is in line with the exceptional solidarity behind Security Council resolution 1368 (2001), calling for the international community to redouble its efforts to prevent and suppress terrorist acts, and with the unity in the General Assembly, calling for urgent action to enhance international cooperation to prevent and eradicate acts of terrorism. A truly global coalition is emerging. I commend the role of the Government of the United States in bringing about this unique coalition.

Terrorist acts can never be justified; they are always unacceptable acts of violence, and those who suffer are innocent civilians. We applaud the multilayered and global approach adopted by the international community and its comprehensive response, using the full set of tools available to Governments: economic, political and diplomatic, as well as military. The United Nations needs as vigilantly as ever to continue addressing the problems that might

contribute to the desperation, alienation and hopelessness that those behind terrorism try to make use of and to turn in their favour with brutal manipulation and fanaticism.

The tragic events of 11 September have radically changed our security environment, and fighting terrorism should therefore become a priority of the United Nations. We recognize that the United Nations has long been active in the fight against international terrorism. Now we need to develop new methods as well as to make full use of all the available means of the United Nations system, the truly global character of the Organization and the numerous international legal instruments available to us.

The fight against terrorism is not a fight against any religion or ethnic group. We must avoid all forms of discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance. Most importantly, we must not be terrorized away from adhering to our basic values of democracy, freedom and human rights. Let us join hands in preventing the twenty-first century becoming an age of terror. We have worked too hard to make this world more secure and stable to allow that to happen.

**Mr. Ahmad** (Pakistan): Only a year ago our leaders assembled in this great city, the capital of the world, to reaffirm their faith in the ideals of the United Nations and to pledge to work together for a better world, a more peaceful and a more just world. They renewed their commitment to the timeless and universal purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The new millennium gave us new hope embedded in the fundamental values of humankind — the values that were clearly stipulated in the Millennium Declaration — the values of freedom, equality, justice, solidarity, tolerance and shared responsibility.

Unfortunately, hard realities seem to have intervened in our journey to our envisioned goal. We were struck by a new face of universal evil that we call terrorism. This scourge knows no geographic boundaries and haunts all religions, regions, countries and societies. The terrorists did not strike at the World Trade Center — they struck at the world. It was an attack against humanity. Nationals of more than 80 countries, including my own, lost their lives in this tragedy.

Our hearts go out to the bereaved families, and we pray for the departed souls. We also pray for those who are still missing. We share the grief and indignation of the people of the United States and stand by them in this hour of their supreme national tragedy.

We have had occasion to pay tributes to this city, its people and its administration for being wonderful hosts to the United Nations and for making it possible for the world community's leaders to assemble here in the cause of peace, security and other great causes of humanity, not only in yearly sessions and meetings, but also for historic summits and conferences.

Today we pay tribute to the city and the people of New York and to those who manage its stupendous affairs, in felicity and adversity, for the valour, forbearance and compassion with which they handled this tragedy. We compliment Governor Pataki and Mayor Giuliani for leading an unprecedented operation. We were privileged to have Mayor Giuliani with us in this plenary Hall yesterday and to share with him our thoughts and sentiments over the tragedy.

At the United Nations, despite diversity in regions and religions, cultures and values, and economic and political systems that we all represent here, our reaction was spontaneous and swift. We condemned the terrorist attacks in the United States and resolved to work together not only to bring the perpetrators to justice but also to prevent and suppress terrorism. The Security Council and the General Assembly unanimously adopted resolutions on 12 September providing legitimacy to the international coalition against this abominable phenomenon. To underscore the seriousness of our purpose in dealing with the question of terrorism, we took an exceptional step by shifting this debate from its traditional forum, the Sixth Committee, to the plenary General Assembly, the chief deliberative policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations system.

My own country, Pakistan, which abhors terrorism and deplores violence of all sorts and scales, did not hesitate to respect and accept the international consensus and the international sentiment. We have always condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including State terrorism. We have never condoned acts of terrorism and have been cooperating with the international community in combating this universal evil. Today, once again, we have pledged our full support and unstinting cooperation in the fight against terrorism.

We welcome this important and serious issue being discussed in the plenary General Assembly. The resultant approach will, of course, be encapsulated in the resolution to be worked out in the Sixth Committee, unless, Mr. President, you are contemplating another alternative. The Security Council also adopted a comprehensive resolution last Friday, giving the fight against terrorism new momentum. It obliges all Member States to deny financing, support and safe haven to terrorists. We hope that this, coupled with the existing international conventions relating to terrorism, will provide an effective normative framework for the world community to deal with this global menace.

We in Pakistan will continue to abide by our obligations under the Charter of the United Nations. President Musharraf has clearly pronounced our policy on this matter and has taken our people into confidence in support of our decision to be part of an international coalition against terrorism. It is a difficult path, but we are determined to support what is right and what is just.

As we seek to grapple with the worst ever challenge to humanity, our approach should be neither cosmetic nor guided by emotion or anger. Surely the perpetrators must be brought to justice. But our battle must not remain confined to retaliation or retribution alone. We must tackle the causes that give rise to forces of hatred and violence. Individual acts of madness or behavioural insanity of groups that snuff out innocent lives are both a crime and a disease. Crimes must be punished; disease must be treated at its roots.

International conventions and resolutions are indeed necessary as a matter of prevention and deterrence. We must implement them. Freezing assets, closing bank accounts, denying safe haven and information sharing are important steps in controlling terrorist acts. For a long-term solution, we must, however, unearth the source of the problem and diagnose the disease beneath the skin. Sheer bandages will not heal the wounds that are rooted in the injustices of systems and societies.

No matter what actions we might contemplate against terrorism, this faceless enemy, this new enemy that we confront, which lurks in the shadows of fear and frustration, breeds on hatred and disillusionment, and is fed by ignorance and poverty, will not disappear unless we build global harmony, mutual tolerance and stability through shared prosperity and development. It will continue to haunt us if the roots of terrorism, which lie in the inequality of societies, the exploitation of the downtrodden, the denial of fundamental rights and the sense of injustice, are not addressed. It would be too simplistic to merely focus on the symptoms or their ugly manifestations. Terrorism has now emerged as a different challenge, which has to be dealt with in a different but resolute and measured manner.

Terrorism is the negation of human dignity. Human dignity can neither be achieved nor guaranteed in an environment of abject poverty and denial of inalienable rights. Most countries, if not all, represented here today have at one point in this history chosen their own destinies based on the cardinal principle of self-determination of peoples. Yet, in contravention of this universal principle, there are peoples even today who remain deprived of their fundamental right of self-determination. The Security Council resolutions pertaining to their destiny and future remain unimplemented in the archives of this Organization. There is an approach and an attitude of political selectivity based upon expediency.

The Security Council resolutions, as I said, remain in the archives of this Organization pertaining to the destiny and future of people who rebel under foreign occupation. It is time for courageous decisions and realistic approaches. Our universal obligation to fight terrorism in all its forms must not deflect us from the need for a just, lasting and honourable settlement of the Palestine and Kashmir disputes, which will indeed bring durable peace and stability to the world at large.

In the face of the current crisis, we fear an impending humanitarian tragedy. Millions of Afghans are leaving their homes in the fear of war. Pakistan, which has been home to the world's largest refugee population for more than two decades, is now faced with the massive influx of nearly 1.5 million Afghan refugees, a new influx that we fear. Secretary-General Kofi Annan has called for a donor alert. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has issued warnings about the magnitude of the emerging humanitarian crisis. How the international community responds to this crisis will be a real test not only of its ability but also of its conscience and moral responsibility.

To make our world better, we also need economic well-being in all parts of the world. At the Millennium Summit last year, our leaders resolved to wage a war

on poverty, to make the right to development a reality for everyone and to free the entire human race from want. These were the words used in the Millennium Declaration.

We need concrete steps to achieve this goal. The ongoing financing for development process gives us an opportunity to address this issue in a holistic manner with the participation of all major stakeholders, including the Bretton Woods institutions and the private sector. We must initiate, through this process, a collective effort towards new patterns of cooperation in terms of trade, partnership and interdependence.

I would like to conclude by quoting from the preamble of President Woodrow Wilson's famous Fourteen Points.

> "It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression. All the peoples of the world are in effect partners in this interest, and for our own part we see very clearly that unless justice be done to others it will not be done to us".

**Mr. Satoh** (Japan): At the outset, I would like to take this opportunity to once again express, on behalf of the Government and the people of Japan, our deepest sorrow for those victimized by the heinous terrorist attacks on 11 September, who have left behind homes and families in many parts of the United States, as well as in many other countries. The bereaved families, as well as the Government and all the people of the United States of America, have our profound sympathy at this time of sadness.

We stand by them with a strong determination to fight terrorism. As Japan's Prime Minister, Mr. Junichiro Koizumi, has repeatedly stated, the Government of Japan considers that these terrorist acts must be seen not solely as assaults against the United States, but also as crimes against humanity and a challenge to democracy and freedom all over the world, and that combating terrorism is also Japan's own responsibility. With this recognition, Japan will make every possible effort, in cooperation with the international community, to bring to justice those responsible for these terrorist attacks.

All Member States of the United Nations must remain in strong solidarity and join together to combat all forms of terrorism, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 56/1 and Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and, indeed, 1373 (2001). In this context, it cannot be overemphasized that it is terrorists whom we must confront — not Muslims, or Islamic or Arab countries.

It is indeed a matter of grave concern that, despite the anti-terrorism efforts to date of the international community, vicious terrorist acts have increased in recent years. Today there is virtually no country that is not faced with the threat of terrorism. It is therefore imperative that the international community act as one in order to eliminate all forms of terrorism.

While our measures to combat terrorism must extend over a broad variety of areas, it is the solemn responsibility of the General Assembly to create a more effective international legal framework in order to bring to justice not only the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of terrorism, but also those who aid, support or harbour terrorists. It is therefore particularly important that we pursue, as our immediate tasks, the following two goals.

The first is the ratification and faithful observance by all Member States of all 12 international anti-terrorism conventions. In this regard, we welcome the entry into force of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings on 23 May this year.

The Government of Japan, for its part, has already ratified 10 of the 12 conventions and is now preparing for the early ratification of the remaining two: the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings. The Japanese Government intends to sign the former by the end of this year — that is, during the period in which the Convention remains open for signature — and then ratify it as soon as possible; and the Government is now expediting the preparations for the early ratification of the latter.

The second goal is the prompt adoption of the two draft conventions before us: the international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and the comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

Needless to say, it is essential to create an effective legal framework to cover issues that are not addressed by existing conventions. But it is equally important for Member States to demonstrate their determination to fight against terrorism by promptly adopting these conventions. To this end, it is important that each of us, in a spirit of cooperation, summon the necessary wisdom and demonstrate maximum flexibility. The Government of Japan, for its part, remains strongly supportive of the initiatives taken by Russia and India to formulate new conventions, and will participate in the Sixth Committee discussions with a view to completing the conventions as quickly as possible.

In addition to the establishment of legal frameworks for combating terrorism, it is imperative to promote international cooperation and policy coordination against terrorism at various levels, within the framework of regional cooperation as well as among like-minded countries. Japan has been addressing the issue with its G-7 and, later, G-8 partners in order to strengthen anti-terrorism cooperation among them and in the world. At the regional level, the Government of Japan has been engaged in anti-terrorism consultations with countries in the Asia-Pacific region, Latin America and the Middle East.

Building upon these experiences and based on the recognition of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, which I referred to at the outset, the Government of Japan is determined to become engaged even more actively in international cooperation, both within and outside the United Nations, to eliminate international terrorism.

**Mr. Alcalay** (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, I would like to take the opportunity afforded by this world forum to reiterate our forceful condemnation and firm rejection of terrorist acts in all their forms and manifestations, wherever they occur in our world. From the very outset the President of the Republic of Venezuela, Hugo Chávez Frías, vigorously repudiated the attacks on New York and Washington, on behalf of all Venezuelans. Once again, we express our deepest sorrow at the terrorist acts against the cities of New York and Washington and the state of Pennsylvania — abominable criminal actions that took thousands of innocent victims and caused untold material damage. We thus consider this to have been an act of aggression against all the citizens of the world. Many of our countries lost nationals in the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center, including my own country. We therefore reiterate our deepest condolences to the Government of the United States of America and to the families of those who lost their lives.

In the United Nations there has never been such immediate and unanimous support as that given by 189 nations of the world to the United States on 12 September. When an emergency meeting of the Security Council was convened, in spite of how difficult it was to reach this building, the other countries came to accompany both permanent and non-permanent members of the Council, where representatives stood up to adopt the resolution unanimously. Just a few hours later, the plenary General Assembly adopted a resolution in another show of support right here.

The Secretary-General very wisely observed that we cannot remain indifferent in the face of an act of such nature. We must therefore repudiate all acts of terrorism, whatever the political, philosophical, religious, ethnic, racial or other considerations invoked to try to justify them. In that respect, Venezuela affirms that to take a stand against terrorism is also to take a stand in favour of peace.

The world is today watching what we do, decide and emphasize here in plenary meeting. It is for that reason that the adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) — which covers various aspects of the phenomenon of terrorism, from financing to the relationship between terrorism and other international crimes, including legal issues — constitutes an important basis for coordinating cooperation in the joint international struggle against this scourge. We believe that it is essential that the General Assembly adopt a resolution to clarify this issue, for we cannot lose this opportunity to have the United Nations, of which we are all part, take a stand before public opinion to reiterate our commitment to an effective and comprehensive fight against terrorism.

The devastating attacks of 11 September must serve to alert the international community to the unforeseeable consequences that an attack with weapons of mass destruction would have. It is for this reason that we want to send a clear and unambiguous message to terrorists that their actions will not go

unpunished and that the hand of justice will not fail to act. That must be the clear message sent from here.

We listened attentively to the words spoken in this Hall yesterday by Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. President George Bush, in various statements broadcast to the public, also stated that these criminal acts must be brought to justice. Along with the other countries of the world, Venezuela would like, as it should, to associate itself with that effort to render justice.

My country is a peace-loving and justice-loving country that does not believe in vengeance as a response, or in responding to terror with terror and hatred with more hatred. We believe in the legal norms of international law and in respecting human rights. But, of course, we also believe in punishing those who committed these abominable acts.

At the recent consultative meetings of the Organization of American States, at which all the ministers of our hemisphere were present, Venezuela joined the consensus in rejecting terrorism and declaring it necessary to determine precisely who is responsible for these acts so that the entire weight of the law may be brought down upon them with the unanimous resolve of the entire hemisphere.

The fight against this scourge must be guided by the fundamental principles of international law. The action of the United Nations must therefore be the proper framework to move forward with international cooperation in this struggle. In that respect, the strengthening of a legal framework is a prerequisite to ensuring the success of international cooperation in this area.

Our delegation attaches great importance to the report of the Secretary-General on measures to eliminate international terrorism, which contains a list describing the current status of international conventions in this field. Our Governments must demonstrate their political will by adhering to, signing and ratifying those instruments.

Aware of the need to strengthen that legal framework, Venezuela has become party to the various international conventions and instruments governing this issue. In fact, we are one of the few States to have signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, which was adopted in this very city in 1997. Our country also thinks that it is necessary to reformulate the definition of terrorism that has been in place heretofore, which considers terrorism a grave ordinary crime.

As I have already said, Venezuela has also participated and contributed at the hemisphere level. In that regard, we have condemned terrorism and made efforts at strengthening cooperation and the coordination of measures to combat this phenomenon.

Terrorism has a negative impact on friendly relations among peoples. It threatens the security of people and States, territorial integrity, and the stability of democratic Governments. It is therefore a disruptive element in the economic and social development of peoples.

In addition to waging a frontal attack on terrorism, we also believe that it is necessary to unleash a parallel struggle against hunger, poverty, disease and the lack of housing and education. In the spirit of the Millennium Declaration — which was adopted at the Millennium Summit — and while waging a frontal battle against terrorism, we must take action in that direction and spare no effort to find a more just and humane international order.

In conclusion, I would like once again to underscore the fact that the international community must show its most resolute will to confront this challenge. There must be no truce with terrorism. We must not allow an era of terror to establish itself in our world. We have waged a long and arduous battle for the era of peace, a battle that has yielded results. We must therefore continue our efforts in that direction. As the President of the United States and the Mayor of this city both said, this must be part of a search for justice that gets to the root of the problem.

**Mr. Šahovic** (Yugoslavia): As this is the first time that I address the General Assembly during this session, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to the presidency, and to wish you every success in your work.

My delegation joins all previous speakers in unconditional condemnation of the heinous terrorist acts committed on 11 September in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania. At the same time, we express once again the deepest condolences of the people and Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the families of the innocent victims and to the Government of the United States.

These horrific crimes provide telling evidence that international terrorism is a scourge of global proportions whose suppression calls for an organized and united international response. In order to provide such a response to terrorism, irrespective of the place and form of its occurrence, we need uniform standards and every available resource — global, regional and national.

In that context, the role of the United Nations is central. We share the opinion of the Secretary-General, who in his recent statement here said that the United Nations must provide the framework of shared values and understanding within which its free and voluntary efforts can interact and reinforce each other, instead of getting in each other's way. The first reaction of the Organization to the terrorist attacks on the United States indeed reflected such a framework and understanding.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia wholeheartedly joins the united front against terrorism and strongly supports the resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly in the wake of the tragic events of 11 September. The most recent Security Council resolution, resolution 1373 (2001) of 28 September, is an extremely important document providing for a range of concrete measures against terrorists and those who harbour them. It is of the utmost importance that we all take the necessary measures to ensure that terrorists are denied financing, support and safe haven from anybody, anywhere.

The system of the international prohibition of, struggle against and punishment of crimes of terrorism should be improved significantly. It is necessary, therefore, for an ever greater number of countries to accept the 12 existing international conventions regulating various aspects of the struggle against terrorism in order to strengthen international cooperation in this field. My delegation also believes that the adoption of a convention based on a comprehensive approach to international terrorism would greatly contribute to global efforts to address this evil in a much more effective way. We hope that this session of the General Assembly will provide an opportunity to make a breakthrough in that direction.

For its part, Yugoslavia has in the past several months become a party to five of those 12 international anti-terrorist instruments. Also, my Government intends to sign the remaining conventions, and the necessary procedures for doing so have already been initiated. In that regard, we consider particularly important the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. At the national level, existing measures for their implementation will be further strengthened and enhanced.

Unfortunately, my country has considerable experience in combating terrorism. Our territory, people, diplomats and missions abroad have been frequent targets of terrorism. Last year, terrorism escalated in southern Serbia, in the ground safety zone at the administrative boundary with Kosovo and Metohija. Also, we have been plagued by serious problems in this respect in Kosovo and Metohija, the autonomous province of the Yugoslav Republic of Serbia, now administered by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). The situation there continues to be very grave. UNMIK is aware of that, and is seeking ways to address the problem. The adoption in June this year of the regulation on the prohibition of terrorism and related offences was one such step, but much more has to be done. My Government is ready to offer all necessary help to facilitate the implementation of that regulation and to provide other assistance in suppressing terrorist activities.

Regrettably, terrorists and terrorism have a wider presence in our region. In fact, terrorism is closely connected with transnational organized crime, trafficking in human beings and in drugs, money laundering and other similar crimes. That is seriously affecting the stability of South-East Europe as a whole. Clearly, there is a need to enhance coordination and cooperation at the subregional and regional levels in order to face the challenge. We in the region have to look into ways and means to prevent the flow of finances and arms to terrorists, to stop them from crossing borders, and to share relevant information. In a nutshell, we need to organize our regional response to terrorism within a wider global framework. Yugoslavia stands ready to make a constructive contribution in that regard.

In conclusion, I reiterate once more that all acts of terrorism must be universally condemned for what they are. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will cooperate and will invest its best efforts within the

United Nations and other multilateral forums, as well as bilaterally, in order to eradicate the evil of terrorism.

**Mr. Dorda** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall speak first on behalf of the Arab Group, then on behalf of my own country, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

The Arab Group expresses its heartfelt condolences to New York, to the Government and the people of the United States and to the families of the victims. The Arab Group condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and condemns all persons, groups, organizations and States that engage in terrorism.

Let it be recalled that, for decades, Arab States were the primary victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations: State terrorism, terrorism by occupation and fundamentalist terrorism. This cost us dearly in terms of lives: even now, many innocent Arab lives are claimed daily by ongoing terrorism. The Arab Group states that Arab countries suffering from terrorism carried out by fundamentalist groups have requested some countries in which the leaders of such organizations and groups are taking refuge to bring those elements to justice. But those countries have never heeded such requests.

Let us recall that in the early 1970s a number of Arab leaders were the first to suggest to the United Nations that an international conference on terrorism be convened, to agree on a uniform definition of terrorism and on international action to eradicate terrorism. Such initiatives made in the United Nations, including that for an international conference, enjoyed widespread international understanding and were endorsed by the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and other intergovernmental organizations. That endorsement was embodied in the Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, the Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on Combating International Terrorism and in the Organization of African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. Arab leaders have continued, to this day, to reiterate all those initiatives and appeals, as is broadly reported in the news media.

The Arab Group is eager to stress its unqualified support for the right of the Arab Palestinian people to freedom and independence. Moreover, we reaffirm that until that right is secured, the Palestinian people is fully within its rights to resist the occupation and all its effects, foremost among them the settlements. We endorse the right of dispossessed or deported Palestinians to return to their homeland, for they have no other homeland.

The Arab Palestinian people are the victims of modern-day terrorism in the fullest sense of the word. Their land is occupied; their property is seized or destroyed by bulldozers. Most of their sons and daughters are displaced, imprisoned, tortured, expelled or deported to the farthest corners of the Earth, in order to empty their land for settlement by foreigners. The Palestinian people are subjected to repression and suppression to prevent them from even expressing their rejection of the occupation. The tools of that repression are of the most brutal, cruel and inhumane kind, including the most modern aircraft carrying the most sophisticated weaponry, in addition to tanks, artillery and the political assassination of all who resist the occupation.

Here, the Arab Group expresses its determination to oppose any attempt to classify resistance to occupation as an act of terrorism. Such an injustice would turn the facts upside-down and would only give rise to hatred. Freedom is indivisible, and must not be diminished in any way. Anyone who maintains otherwise cannot be convincing in his resistance to terrorism in the name of freedom or justice.

Terrorism has no nationality; it has no religion. No terrorist can have any religion at all, unless one counts cases in which terrorism itself becomes a religion. May God forgive us for saying so, but the true religion can only be God Almighty's religion.

As far as nationality is concerned, it is both sad and regrettable that some States refuse to extradite terrorists to their homeland so that they may be brought to justice and punished for their crimes. In fact, such terrorists are sometimes granted the nationality of the host State or a resident's permit, enabling them to move freely internally and externally and thereby work against their home country and threaten its stability.

The word "Islam" is derived from the word for peace, and peace is one of the glorious names of Allah in the Holy Koran. The standard Islamic greeting is "Peace be upon you". The Holy Koran states that he who kills a single human soul commits an act comparable in monstrosity to killing all human beings, and he who saves a single human soul performs an act

comparable in compassion to giving life, that is, saving all human beings.

Islam is a religion of truth, justice and equality. It makes no distinction between race or colour. The most dignified people in the eyes of God are those who are most pious. By what right and on what basis, therefore, is Islam being degraded, particularly by some leading figures in certain countries and in the mass media, which are being manipulated by certain elements for this purpose?

The only outcome to be expected from these trends is the spreading of an atmosphere that encourages conflict between religions and the creation of conditions in the Muslim world conducive to sympathy with the extremist groups, which would help such groups to expand their bases.

In conclusion, the Arab Group wishes to sum up its position by emphasizing the following.

First, terrorism in all its forms and manifestations must be condemned.

Secondly, action must be taken at all levels to combat terrorism in a manner that conforms to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Thirdly, States must also implement all necessary legal procedures — nationally, regionally and internationally — to eradicate terrorism, and they must enforce the provisions of international law and of all internationally binding resolutions related to the ban on the commission, funding or execution of terrorist acts and on condoning the commission of such acts or protecting their perpetrators.

The Group also wishes to emphasize the importance of adopting carefully thought-out measures in this context. The Arab Group urges that a concerted endeavour be made at all levels to combat terrorism through the United Nations in the form of a serious and constructive effort that takes into consideration the concerns, interests and security of all.

Fourthly, resistance to occupation is the legitimate right of all occupied peoples. Occupation is equal to terrorism. In fact, it is one of its ugliest forms.

Fifthly, the Group calls on the United Nations to assume its responsibility vis-à-vis the Palestinian cause, treating it as an occupation issue. This task must be performed expeditiously. In this respect, the Arab States highlight the importance of combating the terrorism that is being exercised by the occupying forces against the Palestinian people, the Lebanese people and the Syrian citizens in the occupied Golan.

Sixthly, States that harbour terrorists of Arab nationality are called upon to surrender them to those countries of origin that have requested such a surrender, so that those elements may be brought to justice.

That was my statement on behalf of the Arab Group.

At this juncture, allow me to make a statement on behalf of my country.

Once again, on behalf of my country and on behalf of my Mission, I should like to express our sincere condolences and sympathy to the people and the Mission of the United States and to the population of this marvellous city, who lost their loved ones as well as a great monument to civilization.

We in Libya, having suffered much from terrorism in its various forms and manifestations, can appreciate better than most the feelings of shock and grief experienced by the American people in the face of these cruel events. From our own experience and suffering, we fully understand the psychological, moral and physical consequences, which will only intensify with the passage of time for some people, in particular the families of the victims.

Experience has taught us to give precedence to humanitarian, moral and religious considerations over any political or subjective consideration. This has been manifested, as can be seen, in our reaction to the recent terrorist attacks against the United States. Our position is in consonance with the teachings of our Islamic religion, which prohibits the killing of innocent people and civilians. This is also reinforced by the high ideals and values of Arab cultural traditions.

My country has been subjected to State terrorism. Its territorial waters in the Gulf of Sirte have been attacked many times, and its airspace violated. Its land and its major cities — Tripoli and Benghazi — have been the targets of terrorist attacks by more than 100 aircraft. That terrorist act took place on the night of 14 April 1986 and its specific goal was the assassination of brother Muammar Al-Qadhafi, the leader of the revolution. His home, his office and his tent all were destroyed. What other objective could the operation have had other than assassination?

Many neighbourhoods were destroyed, killing dozens and wounding hundreds. I was one of them. Many facilities and homes were destroyed, including mine.

My country was also the victim of terrorism on the part of extremist groups, which were assembled, trained and armed by a super-Power — a super-Power that also facilitated their infiltration into Libya. Allow me to quote some examples: there was a terrorist operation in 1984 and an even more heinous one in 1993. I am not even going to mention the other operations, which included terrorist operations whose political goal was assassination.

My country has also been the victim of terrorist operations carried out by extremist groups. Those perpetrators who were captured alive confessed that they were financed by Usama bin Laden. My country was the first one officially to notify Interpol of the matter. Who cooperated with us then? No one.

My country also has been subjected to another form of terrorism. Many entities pretend to be defenders of human rights, but it has been revealed that letters we have received describing those terrorists as prisoners of conscience and demanding their release originated from the same political sources.

This sophisticated kind of terrorism deliberately distorted facts. Through its misleading propaganda and media, it portrayed as defenders of human rights terrorists who were armed to the teeth and who killed innocent people. The terrorist was thus portrayed as the victim of human rights violations. What kind of argument is that?

Another kind of terrorism from which my country suffered was the accusation that we supported terrorism, whereas the party that levelled that accusation against my country was the one that created those whom it today calls terrorists. Previously, when it used them as its agents, it called them mujahedeen or freedom fighters and labelled those who fought for freedom, particularly in Africa, as terrorists, guerrillas or rebels.

We thank God that it was others and not we who entirely reversed their position. It was others who completely changed their positions on Nelson Mandela and others. It was others who changed their position on those, such as the mujahedeen, whom they had once called freedom fighters and now are called terrorists. It was they who entirely reversed course in their view of liberation movements, whose members they once called terrorists. They recognized their independent States, exchanged ambassadors with them, rolled out the red carpets for them and addressed them as "excellencies". Mandela became the conscience of the world and one of the few leaders who command everyone's respect.

We, however, have considered him worthy of all this ever since he was in prison. He was granted our State's highest medal of honour, which his daughter received on his behalf, while he was still imprisoned. We are very proud of that. Like Mandela, the great freedom fighters are all brave African leaders and their brotherly peoples, whom we Libyans were honoured to support in their struggle against foreign occupation until they won their independence. It is for this that we have been accused of supporting terrorism. We supported liberation movements against foreign occupation.

My country was also subject to yet another kind of terrorism: economic terrorism. Some Powers imposed upon us a comprehensive unilateral boycott, which they subsequently managed to make multilateral and, ultimately, international. The expanded boycott covered the same fields as the unilateral boycott did, using even the same terms of reference. The sanctions were imposed under the pretext that we supported terrorism, a pretext which was neither corroborated nor proven, even at the trial held for the two suspects in the incident of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie. We emphasize today that they, more than we, know that the suspects — the one who was acquitted by the court and the one who was convicted without any material evidence, a matter which enraged Scottish legal experts — are innocent of such crimes.

The false nature of the accusations made against the suspects is further reinforced by a story in the British newspaper *The Daily Mirror* published on 11 September 2001. According to that story, a security guard at Heathrow Airport confirmed that an unknown person forcibly entered the luggage hold of the Pan Am flight on the day of the incident and that the intruder could have planted the bomb in one of the suitcases there. Strangely, the evidence presented by this guard when he was questioned by the British anti-terrorist police mysteriously disappeared and was never submitted or made available to the court.

Arabs and Muslims were greatly offended by implicit or explicit references, made by some responsible officials and in the widely disseminated media, to Arabs and Muslims in connection with terrorism. We condemn such references and wish to recall that Arabs themselves have been the victims of terrorism and fanaticism, both of which are rejected by our civilization and strictly prohibited by Islam in Koranic verses revealed by God, which have never been altered or destroyed by any human being.

We also wish to mention that Arabs have condemned terrorism, including the terrorist attacks on the United States, and that Muslims have held prayers for the victims in their mosques, including the Islamic Centre and all the mosques in New York. Muslim representatives to the United Nations participated in those prayers and made statements afterwards to the American media. I was one of those participants. However, the statements of these Islamic representatives and their condemnations of terrorism and the attacks have never been aired. Nevertheless, we are being daily subject to provocations by the media that are neither appropriate nor acceptable and can only be an indication of ignorance or hate, which is an important cause of terrorism and its incitement.

We urge that this new trend directed exclusively against Arabs, Muslims and Islam be swiftly contained. Zionist terrorism in Palestine and Lebanon has never been attributed to religion, nor was an issue ever made of the religion of Timothy McVeigh, who destroyed a government building in Oklahoma City. Why has no one ever raised the issue of McVeigh's religion or of the religion of the Zionists who commit acts of terrorism against Palestinians, Muslims and Arabs every day? This question is on the mind of every Muslim. Those who have been described as Muslims terrorized us before they terrorized the West. They terrorized their own countries before they attacked New York and Washington, D.C. Have they only now become Muslims? What is this?

Arabs and Muslims have suffered enough at the hands of extremists recruited by foreigners. We call upon people from all cultures to support dialogue among civilizations rather than conflict, and dialogue among religions, rather than confrontation. That is precisely what Islam preaches; Muslims are not the enemies of peace.

Having spoken on those issues briefly because of considerations of time, I should now like to reaffirm my country's position on terrorism. First, we fully agree with the repeated assertion of President George Bush of the United States that terrorism is an act directed against freedom. As freedom is indivisible and does not belong to one particular State or group of States, we maintain that foreign occupation is the greatest enemy of freedom — the freedom of countries, peoples, territories and humankind in general. This means that foreign occupation is the ugliest form of terrorism, and the most brutal terrorist occupation is that being carried out against the Palestinian people.

Secondly, in that regard, resistance to occupation is not only a legitimate right for people whose land is occupied by foreigners, but one of their most important duties. Furthermore, the Arab Palestinian people, the Lebanese people and the Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan are fully within their rights in resisting the occupation of their land until they are liberated.

Thirdly, we would like here to repeat the appeal by Libya, contained in document A/46/840 of 9 January 1992, for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly to consider the issue of terrorism and to reach agreement on an accurate definition of what constitutes terrorism — a definition that is not dictated by subjective, whimsical or selfish considerations. Such an objective definition could be used by all of us as a criterion for determining what terrorism is and who terrorists are. Occupation must be included at the top of the list of terrorist acts that the world must confront and eliminate.

Fourthly, we absolutely condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, based on our firm convictions, which have been set out the following official United Nations documents: S/23221, S/23226, S/23414, S/23416, S/23396, S/23641, S/23672, S/23918, S/1995/624, S/1995/633, S/1997/176, S/1997/218 and S/1997/880. I do not believe than any other State has condemned terrorism in as many United Nations documents.

Fifthly, in fulfilment of my country's commitment to combating and eradicating international terrorism, we have become party to the following international and regional conventions and arrangements aimed at dealing with this despicable phenomenon: The Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts

Committed on Board Aircraft, signed at Tokyo in 1963; the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, signed at The Hague in 1970; and the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, signed at Montreal in 1971 — a Convention that we invoked during the Lockerbie case, contrary to the objections and actions of the other parties. The International Court of Justice, in two decisions, stated that that Convention was applicable in that context. We are also party to the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation, supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, signed at Montreal in 1988; the 1973 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents; the 1979 International Convention against the Taking of Hostages; the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, signed at Vienna in 1980; the 1989 International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries; the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel; the 1997 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings; and the Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, signed in Cairo in 1998. My country is also in the process of completing the necessary legal and legislative procedures to enable it to accede to the remaining relevant instruments.

Sixthly, we would like to express our readiness to cooperate in a positive and constructive manner with the international community, through the United Nations, in combating terrorism. We call upon others to work with the United Nations in taking similar positive and constructive action in order to tackle the root causes of terrorist acts so that we can eliminate terrorism once and for all.

**Mr. Valdivieso** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): The events of 11 September have shown once again that international terrorism, with its trail of desolation and death, is one of the greatest challenges facing our Organization. It is a challenge that requires an urgent, vigorous and effective response from us. That is why this debate — which began after the unprecedented and important statement of Mayor Giuliani and included an appeal by the Secretary-General to Member States — is so timely. We would also like to take this opportunity to express once again our condolences to the Government and the people of the United States and to the families of the victims, which included nationals of many countries represented in the Assembly.

The fight against international terrorism is the responsibility of all. One aspect of terrorism in Colombia is the fact that it is supported by another criminal activity with global repercussions: the activity related to the worldwide illicit drug problem. Experience has taught us that the international community's fight against the global problem of drugs — a fight in which the principle of shared responsibility has been accepted — is a critical element in the fight against terrorism. Similarly, success in the fight against international terrorism will depend on the extent to which we also apply the principle of shared responsibility in this field. In this struggle, each State should be assigned a task commensurate with its circumstances and capacity to undertake it.

The actions, methods and practices of terrorists are crimes that are unjustifiable and contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. They are a threat to the peaceful and civilized coexistence of our peoples, to the stability of our institutions and to global peace and security.

But there is a troubling reality before us: the inability of our Organization to take sustained, consistent and effective action against international terrorism. We have to develop methods and instruments that would enable us, through joint and concerted action at the global, regional and national levels, to prevent, combat and defeat international terrorism. To this end, we must take simultaneous action on a number of different fronts.

Colombia considers fundamental the institutional strengthening of the United Nations in the fight against international terrorism. The scale of this threat to peace and security requires our Organization to establish a specific responsible entity in the form of an office, a programme, a fund or an agency of the highest level and with adequate funding, to coordinate efforts aimed at preventing, combating and eradicating international terrorism.

It is true that at each of its sessions, the General Assembly has adopted a resolution on measures to eliminate international terrorism. In the resolution, the Assembly vigorously condemns all terrorist acts, methods and practices, deems them unjustifiable

regardless of their political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic or religious considerations, and calls upon States to adopt measures and to cooperate in the fight against international terrorism. But we also know that in the last few years there has been no consensus on these resolutions and that the General Assembly has had to adopt them by voting. We must take advantage of the mood created by this tragedy to give impetus to our efforts, adopt more flexible positions and seek the unity that is critical for achieving progress in the fight against this scourge of the twenty-first century.

We must overcome the differences with regard to criteria that have for many years prevented us from reaching consensus on a definition of international terrorism and on the persons to whom conventions on terrorism should apply. Colombia is of the view that international terrorism differs from other serious crimes because its aim is to sow terror among the population and to destabilize or force — or at least attempt to force — a Government or an international organization to take or refrain from taking some action. I repeat, for us, terrorism is defined by its objective, and we therefore condemn any terrorist act, irrespective of its authors, motivations, methods, practices or the place where the act is committed. We must once and for all separate the act of terrorism from its political content in order to be able to combat it for what it is, namely, a grave crime against the lives of innocent persons.

Colombia supports without reservations the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on international terrorism and pledges to participate constructively in the coming meeting of the Working Group of the Sixth Committee, in which negotiations are taking place on the draft of a comprehensive convention on terrorism submitted by India, with a view to its adoption during the current session of the Assembly. We also hope that States can reconcile their differences on the draft convention on the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, whose adoption is now all the more urgent and necessary.

The attacks of this past 11 September not only sowed death and disquiet in the city that is host to our Organization but have also created a new economic reality. The multilateral banks must act in a concerted and coordinated way to contain the economic damage caused by terrorist acts, particularly in the developing countries.

On the other hand, it is indispensable to deprive international terrorism of its sources of funding. It has been demonstrated that international terrorism uses financial networks similar to those of the traffic of illicit drugs and the illegal trade in arms. In accordance with the principle of shared responsibility, — which I have mentioned already — Colombia calls for a direct fight against the money-laundering that feeds these grave problems humanity must face.

Colombian laws have set high standards that allow us to show today our successful experience in judicial action against the financing sources of organized crime. It is an experience that we can apply to the fight against international terrorism. Furthermore, we have achieved very fluid cooperation with other national entities, in the United States and countries of South America and Europe. We have complied with all the recommendations of the international Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering, and we are ready to cooperate and give technical assistance if necessary.

Colombia, as a member of the Security Council, therefore voted in favour of resolution 1373 (2001), which imposes on all countries an obligation to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorists acts and to cooperate in that effort. Similarly, we have shouldered the responsibility that is now ours as Chairman of the Sanctions Committee on Afghanistan, through which the only active sanctions regime in force in the United Nations aimed specifically at fighting international terrorism has been imposed on the Taliban regime. Our experience enables us to state that much more remains to be done to enhance the effectiveness of sanctions. The monitoring mechanism approved last July represents an important step forward in this regard.

In recent days, our country has supported the convening of the consultative meeting of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, a basic mechanism for the collective defence of the countries of the Americas. The meeting established that terrorist attacks against the United States of America are attacks against all States in the hemisphere and that all States will respond by using mechanisms of reciprocal assistance. Colombia also participated actively in the consultative meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Organization of American States, at which, at the initiative of Colombia among other countries, it was decided to negotiate an inter-American convention against terrorism and to strengthen the Inter-American

Committee on Terrorism (CICTE), with a view to intensifying the campaign against this crime through the adoption of urgent measures to enhance inter-American cooperation in this area.

Allow me to conclude by reiterating my country's firm commitment to the fight against international terrorism and by insisting in the necessity of the urgent, vigorous and effective response of the United Nations to face this real threat to international peace and security.

**The Acting President**: I now give the floor to the Permanent Observer of Palestine.

**Mr. Al-Kidwa** (Palestine) (*spoke in Arabic*): During the past few sessions of the General Assembly, Palestine did not actively participate in the debate on terrorism. We did not because we believed that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was nearing a solution, with all that that necessarily implies in terms of redefining many relevant issues. We also believed that the increased threat of terrorism essentially involved groups inside certain States, particularly within some Arab States, seeking to change the system of government, typically on the basis of an extreme religious position, a phenomenon unanimously rejected by the international community.

The other reason was that we believed that international terrorism in general was waning and starting to disappear. Unfortunately, we were wrong. Perhaps we were too optimistic. In the Middle East, particularly in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, the peace process and the situation on the ground have deteriorated in an extremely dangerous way. Against the ongoing background of foreign occupation, we are now witnessing the resurfacing of accusations of terrorism and counter-accusations of State terrorism and war crimes.

"Internal terrorism" — if this term is correct — did not end either. We saw clear loopholes in the collective international position aimed at putting an end to this kind of terrorism. At the same time, international terrorism was not defeated. Indeed, it shocked us all when it culminated in the serious tragedy and devastation of 11 September in the United States of America. Somehow, all of the above might be related.

The Palestinian side, through President Yasser Arafat and many other Palestinian officials, has strongly condemned the heinous terrorist act of 11 September. This condemnation was not only a reflection of our political responsibility, but was also in line with our conscience as Muslims, Arabs and Palestinians — Muslims and Christians alike. There can be no justification whatsoever for this horrible act. We wish once again to express our heartfelt condolences to President George W. Bush, the United States Government and the American people, and to the victims' families in particular.

In addition, we, as members of the United Nations family and its Missions who live in New York — at least for some time — have found our lives and those of our families impacted, as were the lives of every single inhabitant of this unique city. The Palestinian side welcomes the clear, strong international reaction against what happened and welcomes confronting the phenomenon of international terrorism. We are ready to add our very modest efforts to international ones that aim to bring the perpetrators of this crime to justice, to prevent any recurrence of what happened and to put an end to international terrorism.

The United States, as the nation that was attacked and as the world's super-Power, has striven to form an international coalition to wage a multifaceted battle against international terrorism. This broad international coalition is a positive development, and we call for the use of the available forum of international work in this respect. We also reaffirm the importance of international legitimacy.

As the Secretary-General has stated, the United Nations can and must play a decisive role. We support this statement and continue to call for the full engagement of United Nations bodies, including the Security Council, in the upcoming battle. We also welcome the statements made by several officials in the United States and in Western countries in general, including the clear position indicating that this is neither a battle against Islam nor a battle against Arabs. This is an extremely important issue, and it requires constant reiteration. There must also be a conscious and continued resistance to any attempts to distort such a position or push things in the wrong direction, as some forces have been trying to do. At least one State, for its own interests, is trying to widen the circle to include targets that have nothing to do with the events

of 11 September or with the battle against terrorist groups with global outreach.

We must try to understand what happened, and we must realize that a successful battle requires rethinking some policies that have political, social and economic repercussions, with the ultimate aim of achieving a more just situation everywhere. Exactly why did the terrorists do what they did on 11 September? I am unable to give a decisive answer about the reasons for this diabolical act. But the reasons might include a rejection of the West, with all its cultural dimensions — a matter that we cannot solve through divergent policies. This has nothing to do with Arabism or Islam, nor, indeed, does it have any logical reason.

Of course, we firmly reject any conflict among civilizations. We stand for dialogue among civilizations and for the nurturing of humanity on the basis of diversity and tolerance. Nevertheless, we should not stop there. We have to look into the negative positions and feelings of millions of Arabs and Muslims towards the United States and some other Western States. These are positions and sentiments that grow stronger every day, compete with the reasonable mainstream and steer it towards extremism. We must look into the reasons that provide a breeding ground for the emergence of such groups and of such actions as those which took place on 11 September. The main reason may also be what the ordinary person in the region has witnessed in terms of policies regarding the issue of Palestine over the course of almost a hundred years. It is an unbelievable story, involving the imposition of gross and severe injustice through long years of pain, suffering, disappointment and unbearable conditions.

In addition, other things happened in the region that cannot be completely isolated from the Palestinian issue. All of these have led the ordinary person in the region to conclude that the system of values and their criteria, basically established by the West, even when we accept them, seem to be inapplicable to us — maybe because we are Arabs and Muslims. We must bring all this to an end. In particular, we must achieve a just solution to the issue of Palestine, thus removing the source of huge anger and despair in the region. That in itself, if achieved, will not conclude the battle against international terrorism, but it is a necessary condition in the battle that the international community must wage in any case.

As to what happened on 11 September, several Palestinian intellectuals have signed the following statement written by the great Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish:

> "The catastrophe that hit Washington and New York has only one name — the madness of terrorism. This catastrophic event was neither a dark science fiction film nor the day of reckoning. It was terrorism that is country-less, colourless and creed-less, no matter how many names of Gods, deities and agonies of man it may have enlisted in order to justify itself."

He goes on to say that

> "Nothing can justify this terrorism that kneads human flesh with iron, cement and dust. Nor can anything justify polarizing the world into two camps that can never meet — one of absolute good and the other of absolute evil. Human civilization is the result of world societies contributing towards a global heritage, the accumulation and interaction of which led towards the elevation of humanity and nobility of consciousness."

*The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.*